

# MARICOPA COUNTY

# 2020

## Eye to the Future

March 13, 2006

MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA

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## PREFACE

Maricopa County recognizes that urban development will continue to change land use patterns. The major factor in development, especially Maricopa County, has been significant population growth. In fact, the Arizona Department of Economic Security projects Maricopa County will have 4.5 million people by 2020. With that population growth it is inevitable that development will continue throughout Maricopa County. However, the question that needs to be asked is ... How will that development occur?

*Eye on the Future 2020*, the Maricopa County Comprehensive Plan, provides a guide for decisions concerning growth and development, and considers strategies for addressing growth-related impacts. Among the many strategies is the creation of scenic corridors for unique locations in Maricopa County. The McMicken Dam area is one of these unique locations, and thus the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor Guidelines are established to help enhance this area's special characteristics.

## INTRODUCTION

The entire northwest valley is experiencing rapid growth and development. Consequently, Maricopa County launched the study of a proposed scenic corridor for the McMicken Dam area. The main factors that help promote the McMicken Dam as a scenic corridor include:

- Varying topography, with the White Tank Mountains to the west of the corridor and flat land basin behind the McMicken Dam.
- Native Sonoran Desert vegetation including palo verde, creosote bushes, and bur sages.
- Important wildlife and vegetation habitats.
- Access to the White Tank Mountain Regional Park which is a major recreational destination in Maricopa County.
- Unique views and landscapes that attracts residents in search of a distinct quality of life.
- Designated as a segment of the Maricopa County Regional Trail.

The McMicken Dam area is a unique place to live, provides many recreational opportunities, and is considered a place of regional significance. These guidelines have been developed to guide and enhance planning of this corridor as development occurs. The intent of these guidelines is to highlight, promote, and preserve McMicken Dam's scenic and environmental characteristics, and help reflect the character of the community.

### Scenic Corridor Overview

Scenic corridors are intended to highlight unique aspects of an area or region. Scenic corridors, including the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor, recognize that people live in these unique areas for their high quality of life. Based on the Maricopa County Comprehensive Plan, scenic corridors are structured to emphasize public involvement and reflect the comments, ideas, and recommendations of the public. Therefore, the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor gives current and future residents of this area an opportunity to voice their decisions about future urban growth that will impact their lives.

The McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor will allow residents of this area to have a voice in the future urban development of their area, and to identify a vision, ideas, and concepts about their region. It will also address impacts from future urban development to help maintain the corridor's unique character and the residents' quality of life. This scenic corridor will help minimize the impacts that rapid urban growth may have on this area, help protect property values, and help accommodate future population growth.

Although “scenic” is a subjective term, for this study it means an inherent characteristic— existing and apparent— in the current landscape.

## **Study Boundary**

The McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor extends ¼-mile on each side of the property owned by the Flood Control District of Maricopa County (FCDMC) and the Maricopa County Regional Trail, except properties within the City of Surprise. The length is approximately 9.5 miles and extends from Peoria Avenue to Grand Avenue (see **Figure 1**). At a public meeting in May 2005, Maricopa County Planning and Development staff provided information on the widths of other scenic corridors in the County; for example, the Wickenburg Scenic Corridor extends to 2 miles on each side of the highway, while the Carefree Highway Scenic Corridor extends a quarter-mile. Based on this analysis and discussions with stakeholders, it was recommended, that a quarter-mile boundary would be most appropriate.

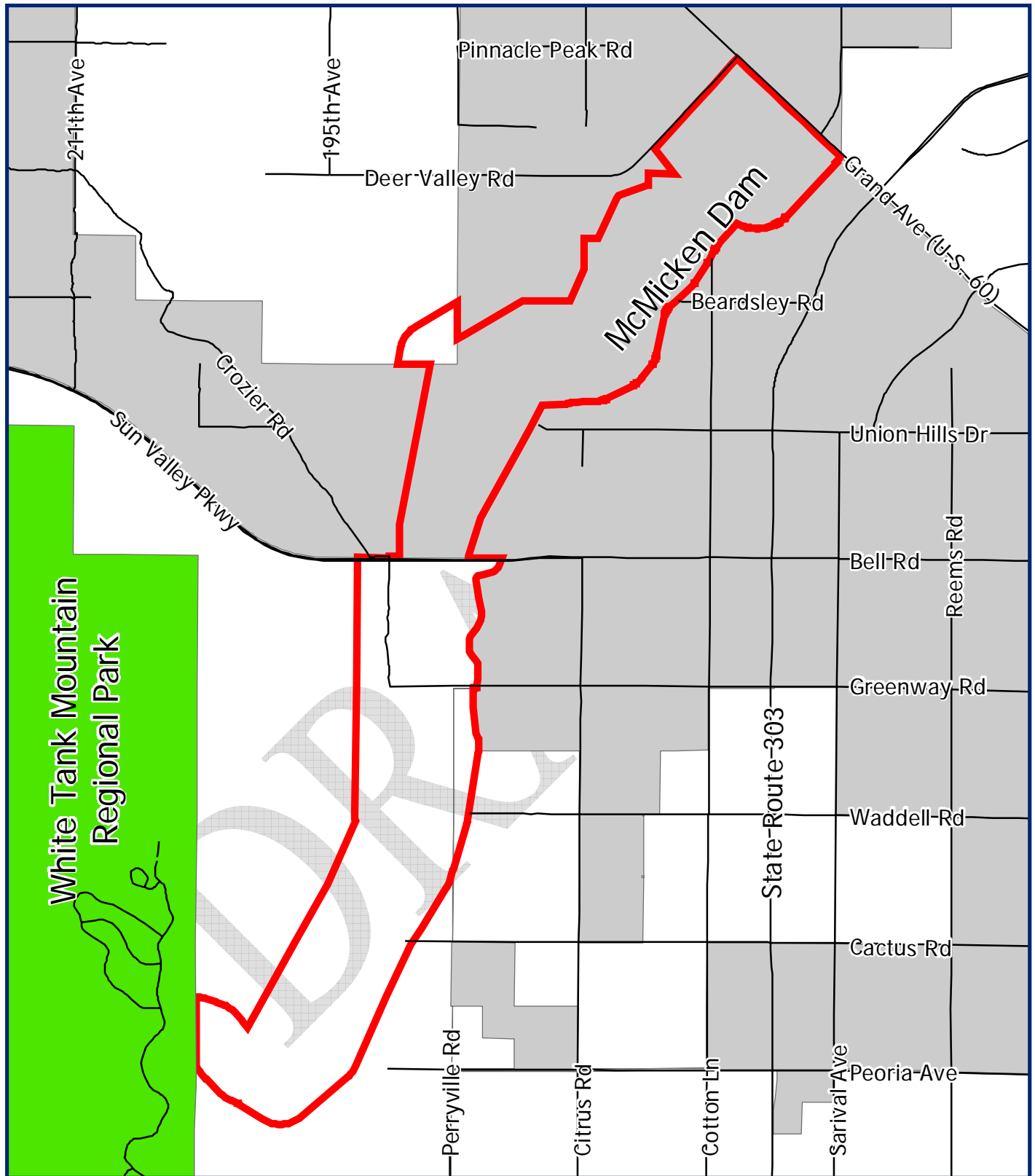
## **Study Purpose**

These guidelines help implement the Maricopa County Comprehensive Plan. New urban development within the corridor is encouraged to follow these guidelines as part of the Maricopa County Comprehensive Plan. This includes new master planned communities, subdivisions, commercial, and industrial development within the corridor. This document is not meant to present a formal design plan, but provides design guidelines for the protection and enhancement of the McMicken Dam area to be implemented as development occurs. Therefore, land use plans and special studies like scenic corridors are critical to formulating public opinion on issues related to future urban development and potential impacts. Without these documents, assumptions would be made about community needs.

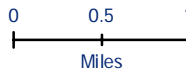
While scenic corridor guidelines can give residents a greater say in the development of their region, it is important to identify their limitations. Most important, these guidelines are policy, not regulatory, meaning they are guides for public and private decision makers about the character of urban development in the McMicken Dam area.

These guidelines only apply to new residential master planned communities, subdivisions, commercial, and industrial development. There are other limitations as well, which are briefly discussed below.

# McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor Study



- Arterial Road
- Project Boundary
- County Park
- Incorporated



**Study Boundary  
Figure 1**



MARICOPA COUNTY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



Maricopa County  
Planning and Development  
501 N. 44th St., Ste. 100  
Phoenix, Arizona 85008

December 2005



This study **DOES NOT**:

- Prevent the sale or transfer of land— land can be bought and sold at the discretion of the responsible parties
- Prevent development of land— land can be developed in accordance with the Maricopa County Planning and Zoning policies and regulations
- Apply to existing homes, buildings, structures, etc.— only the types of new development identified above are subject to the guidelines
- Apply to residential development outside of recorded subdivisions— lot split property is exempt from these guidelines
- Designate historic land or buildings— such designation are typically a federal process
- Identify future land uses— land uses are identified in county area plans. This document only provides design guidelines for the character of new development.

### **Future Development Implications**

In Maricopa County, scenic corridors have neither deterred nor promoted growth. These guidelines assume that the historic pattern of urban growth and development will continue in Maricopa County. Therefore, these guidelines are intended to help integrate urban growth into the community, to minimize impacts to personal property and quality of life, and to reflect residents' and stakeholders' recommendations. This study is consistent with other scenic corridors in Maricopa County, which were established ahead of urban growth pressures. For instance, since adoption of the Carefree Highway Scenic Corridor, there have been several new commercial, office, and other non-residential developments, and additional commercial, employment and residential development is expected in the future. Growth within the Wickenburg Highway Scenic Corridor along Grand Avenue is also expected to be significant, most notably with large master planned communities. Approved and pending master planned communities will add an estimated 100,000 new residents to this area, although additional urban development will likely increase this estimate significantly.

## PROCESS AND BACKGROUND

The preparation of these guidelines was based upon research and analysis of the area, citizen participation input throughout the process, and reviewing existing planning documents that influence the McMicken Dam area.

### Research and Analysis

This phase included documenting opportunities and impacts to the McMicken Dam Corridor and immediate surrounding areas. The following table shows several opportunities and potential impacts:

Opportunities	Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LIMITED development in the area due to limited access to the area and wash corridor</li><li>• Wash corridor: prominent amount of vegetation due to Trilby Wash Detention Basin</li><li>• Beautiful views and vibrant sunsets</li><li>• Opportunity to promote the Maricopa County Regional Trail</li><li>• Opportunity for meandering paths</li><li>• Opportunity for recreation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Urban encroachment: Development Master Plans and subdivisions</li><li>• Washes, rivers, and vegetation</li><li>• State Trust Land could be sold around the McMicken Dam</li></ul>

#### *Opportunities*

McMicken Dam's natural beauty and access to the Maricopa County Regional Trail make it suitable for a scenic corridor in order to preserve its unique character. Due to its isolation, much of the McMicken Dam area is undeveloped. Also, due to its isolation and the Trilby Wash Detention Basin, the McMicken Dam area has a large amount of vegetation and wildlife. The McMicken Dam area also has the opportunity to promote the Maricopa County Regional Trail, as part of the Comprehensive Plan, since McMicken Dam is considered to a major component to the trail. Consequently, the McMicken Dam area has several opportunities to create a vibrant, scenic as well as recreational area.

#### *Impacts*

In unincorporated Maricopa County, there are three large approved master planned communities in the area: Zanjero Trails, Cortessa, and White Tank Foothills. Zanjero Trails Development Master Plan (DMP) is located east of the proposed McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor along Perryville Road between Bell Road, to the north, and Camelback Road, to the south. Zanjero Trails includes various residential densities, and commercial and non-residential land uses. This development will add approximately



7,600 units on approximately 2,600 acres. The Cortessa DMP is located north of Olive Avenue between Perryville Road and Citrus Road. This project will add 1,732 units to the area on just approximately 600 acres. The White Tank Foothills DMP, located south of Olive Avenue between Perryville Road and Citrus Road, will add 1,286 dwelling units to the area on 640 acres. Development master planned communities in unincorporated Maricopa County offer a range of residential densities as well as possible commercial and non-residential uses. These projects alone will add almost 13,000 residential units and approximately 35,000 people to the area. Further growth and development is expected in the future (see **Figure 2**).

A major impact posed by future urban development is to the natural environment: washes, vegetation and wildlife. The McMicken Dam and surrounding Trilby Wash Detention Basin provide a habitat for distinctive vegetation and wildlife. Guidelines should consider the protection of these valuable resources.

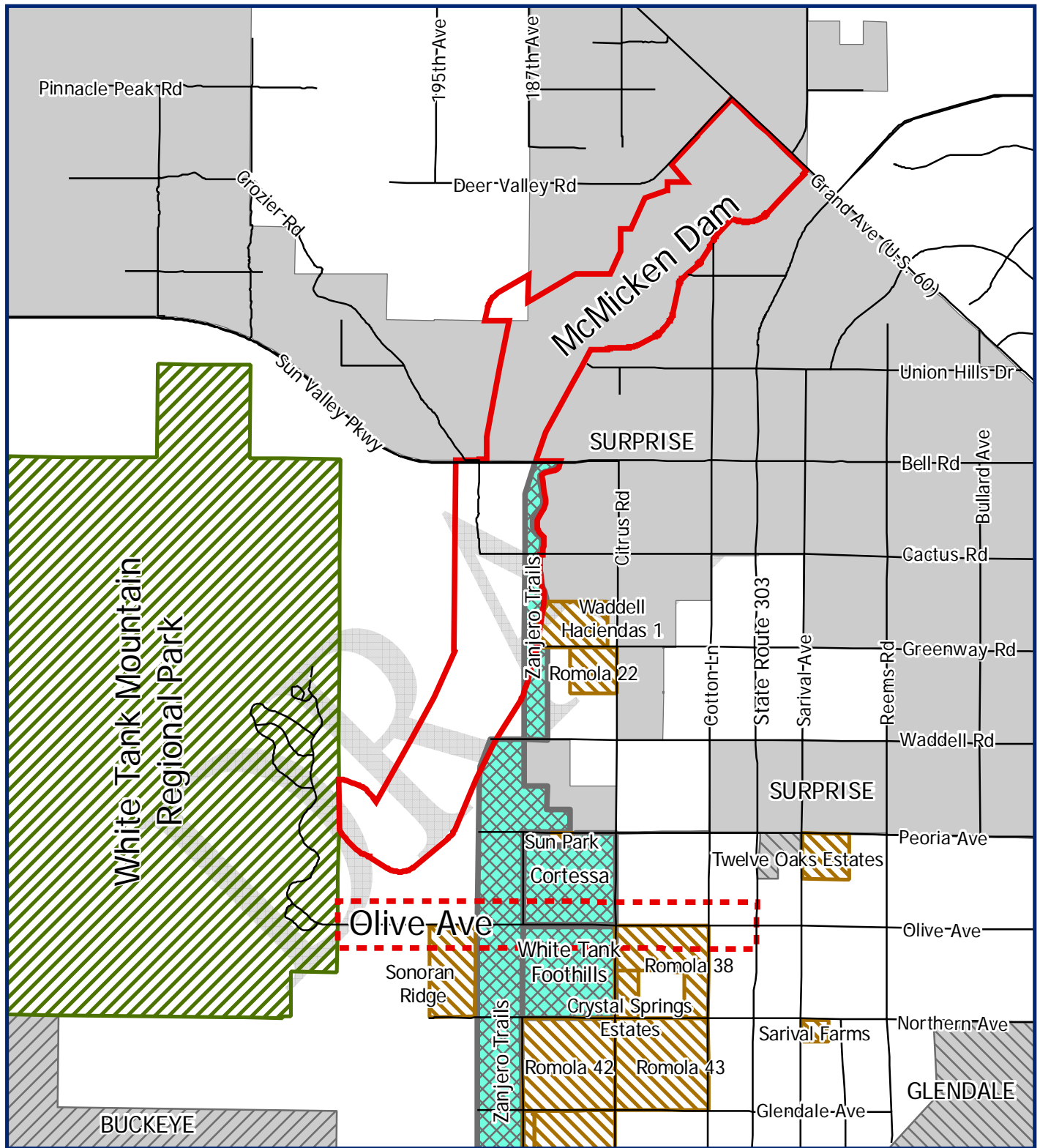
### **Citizen Participation**

To guide this process, the Maricopa County Planning and Development Department identified stakeholders who provided unique perspectives on how these guidelines should be structured, what they should include, and what they should achieve. Stakeholders included public and private agencies, and property owners and residents of the McMicken Dam area. Furthermore, to help promote greater regional coordination and cooperation in this area, Maricopa County extended invitations to the City of Surprise to participate in this effort. To solicit input and recommendations, Maricopa County hosted several meetings.

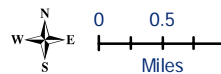
An initial public meeting was held May 11, 2005 to introduce the study to residents. At this meeting, staff provided information on the study's purpose and what it will achieve, about anticipated future urban growth near the study area, and the impact that other county scenic corridors have had on urban growth. Presentations were provided by county staff, and attendees were given questionnaires to solicit additional input.

A second meeting was scheduled in February 2006 to gather input and suggestions for the first draft of the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor.

# McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor Study



- Arterial Road
- McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor
- Olive Ave Scenic Corridor
- County Park
- Subdivision
- Development Master Plan
- SURPRISE
- BUCKEYE
- GLENDALE



**Major Residential Developments**  
**Figure 2**



## Plans and Guidelines

Several Maricopa County plans and scenic corridor studies provide direction into the planning of the McMicken Dam region. Research on existing scenic corridors within Maricopa County was conducted and documented to generate ideas for possible guidelines which apply to the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor. The McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor guidelines are, in part, based on these plans and studies.

### *Eye To The Future 2020, Maricopa County Comprehensive Plan*

Adopted in 1997, *Eye to the Future 2020*, the Maricopa County Comprehensive Plan, connects the importance of land use planning with available infrastructure and services. The State of Arizona requires preparation of a comprehensive plan in order to “conserve the natural resources of the county, to ensure efficient expenditure of public funds, and to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public” (A.R.S. §11-806). *Eye to the Future 2020* seeks to create strong and vibrant communities within Maricopa County by encouraging orderly development while creating a healthy environment, a vibrant economy, and an efficient transportation system.

Included as part of the comprehensive plan are several objectives and policies relating to scenic areas, including the following:

- Objective O1: Promote physical and visual public access to open space resources, which includes:
  - Policy O1.2 Encourage protection of view corridors within new and established scenic corridors.
  - Policy O1.3 Encourage protection of public access around existing regional parks from urban encroachment.

### *White Tank/Grand Avenue Area Plan*

The White Tank/Grand Avenue Area Plan, adopted in 2000, helps accommodate future urban growth in this area of the county over the next ten to fifteen years. New growth will be accommodated in a manner that is consistent with protecting public health and safety, and is coordinated with available urban infrastructure and services. The White Tank/Grand Avenue area, which includes the McMicken Dam Corridor, is experiencing rapid urban growth which is significantly increasing the population of this area; increasing the need for urban infrastructure, services, recreation; and changing the area's overall land use pattern. The White Tank/Grand Avenue Area Plan is the result of a large scale public participation effort which included input and recommendations from property owners and other stakeholders. The plan's implementation program identifies long and short-term measures that can help implement the citizen-driven goals,

objectives, and policies. Specific policies contained in the White Tank/Grand Avenue Area Plan dealing with the development of scenic corridors include the following:

- Policy L3.2.1: Maintain and enhance opportunities for recreation offered by the White Tank Mountain Regional Park
- Policy L3.5.7: Support and encourage efforts to preserve the Agua Fria River and major floodways as recreation corridors.
- Policy E1.2.3: Encourage efforts to establish an open space trails system between Estrella Regional Park, White Tank Mountain Regional Park, and Lake Pleasant Regional Park.
- Policy E1.4.2: Support the use of canals and floodplains as recreation corridors.

### *City of Surprise General Plan*

The McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor is mostly located within the municipal planning area of the City of Surprise, with the exception of areas south of Peoria Avenue. The City of Surprise General Plan designates the area for Rural Residential (0-1 du/acre), Agriculture, and Open Space uses. In particular, the McMicken Dam itself (property owned by FCDMC) is delineated as Open Space. However, state law allows potential development of open space areas, if added to the public domain.

### *Maricopa County Regional Trail*

Adopted by the Board of Supervisor's in 2004, the Maricopa County Regional Trail System is a collection of trails, paths, and natural corridors under the jurisdiction and control of many agencies throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area. McMicken Dam, as part of the Maricopa County Regional Trail, is considered to be the highest level of acquisition due to its proximity and connection to the White Tank Mountain Regional Park. An established trail head and large equestrian staging facility is located just inside the park at the trail entrance, near the southern tip of McMicken Dam connecting to the park boundary.

### *Scenic Corridors in Maricopa County*

There are four existing scenic corridors in Maricopa County: Carefree Highway Scenic Corridor, Wickenburg Highway (Grand Avenue) Scenic Corridor, Interstate 17 Scenic Corridor, and State Route 74 Scenic Corridor. Each Scenic Corridor addresses differing issues affecting the areas in which the corridor is located.

### Carefree Highway Scenic Corridor

The Carefree Highway Scenic Corridor, adopted in 1997, was chosen due to its scenic resources and vistas, the natural Sonoran Desert landscape, and the emerging urban growth patterns. Since 1997, several rezone and development applications for various

types of land uses have been approved. Jurisdictions along the Carefree Highway, including the Town of Cave Creek and the City of Phoenix, have also recognized its scenic nature and have established scenic corridors along parts of the highway under their jurisdiction. Design standards in this plan include setbacks, landscaping, and signage.

#### Wickenburg Highway Scenic Corridor

The Wickenburg Highway Scenic Corridor, extending from Sun City West to the Town of Wickenburg, was adopted in 1991 and was initiated in response to growth pressures along Grand Avenue. Today, this corridor continues to see increased growth pressures around Wittmann and Morristown, primarily from large master planned communities, commercial development, and wireless communication towers. The scenic corridor helps preserve views of the surrounding hills, mountains, and desert. Design standards in this scenic corridor include building height, screening, signage, landscape, slope, access and architectural design.

#### State Route 74 Scenic Corridor

The State Route 74 Scenic Corridor Overlay Zoning District is part of the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance. Much of the area is undisturbed desert with hills in the eastern portion and flatter terrain in the west. The scenic corridor extends through unincorporated Maricopa County along State Route 74. For those portions of the highway that have been incorporated, the City of Peoria has established a specific area plan. This plan includes additional setbacks, limiting commercial development to selected nodes, and access controls for development that fronts the roadway. To date, there has been little development along the highway since much of the land is State Trust land, although these areas will likely be developed once transferred to private ownership. Further, there are several large, privately held parcels along this highway that will likely be developed as master planned communities.

#### I-17 Scenic Corridor

The I-17 Scenic Corridor Overlay was adopted in 1999 as part of the New River Area Plan. The corridor extends from Carefree Highway north to the Yavapai County line. The designation was established to preserve environmentally sensitive land areas and view corridors, and encourage innovative and sensitive planning and quality design. Much of the land on the western side of I-17 has been incorporated into the City of Phoenix. Within this scenic corridor, there has been significant growth, including additions to the Anthem master planned community. Design standards for the I-17 Scenic Corridor Overlay include height regulations, screening, signage, architectural design, slope, setbacks, access, parking, lighting, environmental evaluation, utilities, and landscaping.

## GOALS AND METHODS

Two goals were identified through the research and planning process. First, McMicken Dam provides unique access to the McMicken Dam trail, as part of the Maricopa County Regional Trail. This allows the opportunity to reinforce the Maricopa County Regional Trail which identifies this area as an important trailhead. Second, the McMicken Dam area provides a place to view the natural environment: washes, vegetation, and wildlife. The natural environment is mostly untouched and needs to be preserved to greatest extent possible. This also ties into the fact that McMicken Dam is already considered a major component of the Maricopa County Regional Trail.

### Goals

*Keeping the vision of the Maricopa County Regional Trail*

- Great place for recreational opportunities
- Opportunities to design unique trails and paths

*Maintaining the natural environment: washes, vegetation, and wildlife*

- Opportunities to view beautiful scenery: landscape, sunsets, etc.
- Opportunities to create open space for residents to take pride in the natural environment, near and around the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor

### Methods

*Great place for recreational opportunities*

- Inter-modal transportation
- Connectivity to residential neighborhoods
- Bike racks and lockers
- Retention areas to include park

*Opportunity to design unique trails and paths*

- Meandering paths
- Vegetated areas along paths
- Pedestrian-oriented community

*Opportunities to view beautiful scenery: landscape, sunsets, etc.*

- Maintain viewsheds to the White Tank Mountains
- Lighting issues: maintain dark skies

*Opportunities to create open space for residents to take pride in the natural environment, near and around the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor*

- Salvage plan and landscape plan
- Promote xeriscape – low water use plants
- Wildlife corridors
- Create areas to congregate

Overall, planning in the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor should reflect the need to maintain existing natural features: pathways, natural corridors, washes, vegetation, and wildlife.

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## **MCMICKEN DAM SCENIC CORRIDOR**

The McMicken Dam is located in the northwest part of the Phoenix metropolitan area and lies within portions of unincorporated Maricopa County, excluding the City of Surprise. McMicken Dam was constructed by the Army Corp of Engineers in the 1950's to protect Luke Air Force Base from flooding. The dam and its outfall components are owned and maintained by the Flood Control District of Maricopa County.

The McMicken Dam is a linear tract of land that is approximately 9.5 miles long. The west end of the dam is situated approximately ¼ mile east of White Tank Mountain Regional Park in an area that is predominately Sonoran Desert vegetation. The dam is 34 feet above grade at its highest point and offers outstanding panoramic views of the western part of the Valley. The White Tank Mountains lie two miles west of the dam and form a rugged and dramatic scenic backdrop to the corridor.

The McMicken Dam extends in a slight arc to the northeast for a distance of about 9.5 miles to Grand Avenue. The top of the dam is approximately 12 feet wide and has an unpaved road used for operations and maintenance. The base of the dam is approximately 165 feet wide. In the southern segment of the dam, FCDMC owns a strip of land that varies in width from 12-200 feet. In the northern segment of the dam, FCDMC owns a strip of land that varies in width from 1000-5000 feet. Within this strip, FCDMC has unpaved roads along the base of the dam and along the northern perimeter of the property. Between these two roads is a low flow channel and pool area that intercepts runoff and carries water northeastward to the emergency spillway. During the past 40 years the low flow channel and pool area have been allowed to regenerate naturally. The result is Sonoran Desert vegetation containing a rich variety of plant materials that makes the McMicken Dam Corridor a potentially significant wildlife habitat.<sup>1</sup>

The McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor is located in the northwest region of Maricopa County. One place of regional significance is the White Tank Mountain Regional Park. The White Tank Mountain Regional Park, located west of the corridor boundary, is a major recreational location. The White Tank Mountain Regional Park is over 30,000 acres and offers such activities as camping, hiking, picnicking, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.

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<sup>1</sup> Maricopa County Regional Trail System Plan, P. 25



## Land Use and Zoning

Much of the land throughout the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor is owned and maintained by the FCDMC as a dam to prevent and control flooding. The only other currently identifiable land uses within the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor are public facility and a regional landfill. The area located north and south of Greenway Road, just east of Perryville Road alignment, is designated as public facility which is operated as a water company by Maricopa County Municipal Water Conservation District No. 1. The Maricopa County Municipal Water District continues to manage the irrigation system for the benefit of west valley farmers.<sup>2</sup> The area located northwest of Yorkshire Drive and 187<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignments is part of the Northwest Regional Landfill.

All of the zoning throughout the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor is designated as Rural-43, meaning single family residential at one dwelling unit per acre, except for lands incorporated into the City of Surprise.

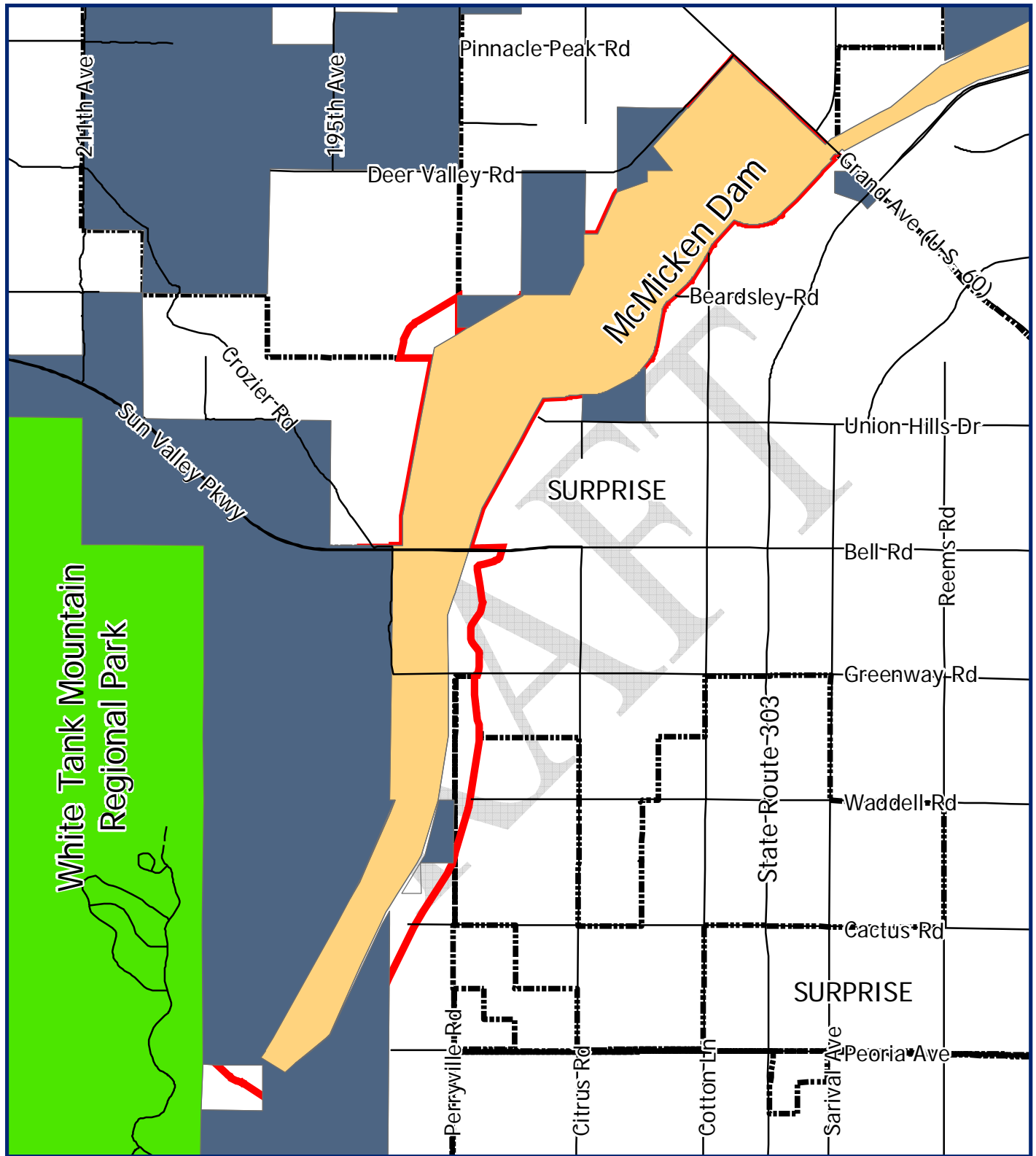
## Ownership

Ownership within the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor includes land administered by the FCDMC, Arizona State Land Department, and private land (see **Figure 3**). A majority of the land is administered by the FCDMC. Properties administered by the Arizona State Land Department are generally located west of the McMicken Dam levee from Peoria Avenue to the south, extending to Grand Avenue to the north. Currently, State Trust Land provides a unique buffer between the White Tank Mountain Regional Park and McMicken Dam. It should be noted that State Trust Land is typically auctioned off and can be developed as master planned communities, subdivisions, commercial, or industrial uses. Finally, much of the land east of the McMicken Dam levee is owned by private property owners.

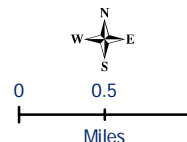
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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fishinaz.com/Lakes/Lake.php?num=34>

# McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor Study



- Arterial Road
- Flood Control District
- Incorporated
- Project Boundary
- State Trust Land
- County Park
- Private Land



**Land Ownership**  
**Figure 3**



MARICOPA COUNTY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



Maricopa County  
Planning and Development  
501 N. 44th St., Ste. 100  
Phoenix, Arizona 85008

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## DESIGN GUIDELINES

These guidelines are based on recommendations from area residents and stakeholders to help mitigate the future impacts that urban growth will have on the corridor area. As a result, residents, stakeholders, and Maricopa County helped identify guidelines for the following issues.

- Landscaping, including vegetation types and densities
- Natural habitats, such as washes and wildlife migration corridors
- Character/Identity, which varies along the scenic corridor
- Building height, which impacts view sheds
- Lighting, including streets, security and advertisement
- Signs, including residential monument signs and advertisements
- Perimeter fencing, for residential subdivisions, commercial and industrial developments
- Miscellaneous, for other topics not discussed in other sections

These design guidelines are only applicable to new residential subdivisions, master planned communities, commercial development, and industrial development. These guidelines are policies, not regulations, and they do not supersede the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance.

### 1. Landscape

Landscaping is considered an important part of scenic corridors, and the diversity of vegetation within and along the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor is part of what makes this area unique. Landscaping can provide wildlife habitat, a sense of open space, and a buffer between land uses. Residents expressed an interest in using landscaping to help enhance future urban development, and to help it blend into the surrounding area. Therefore, new, applicable development should adhere to the following guidelines for landscaping.

- 1.1 A plant survey and salvage plan should be submitted at the time of platting or precise plan submission.
- 1.2 New, applicable development should provide landscape plan(s) as part of development applications.
- 1.3 Existing native vegetation should be retained in place to the greatest extent possible, except to provide proper sight distance.
- 1.4 Where native plants must be removed, encourage transplantation of salvaged plants on site, in accordance with the salvage plan.

- 1.5 Plant species and densities should be consistent with the surrounding landscape character of the specific location.
- 1.6 Encourage native landscaping to reduce the visibility of commercial and industrial structures and blend with the natural land cover.
- 1.7 Native granular soils should be maintained as a top dressing on all landscape areas to provide a consistent, desirable character.
- 1.8 Where appropriate, new landscaping should compliment existing indigenous vegetation through the use of xeriscape design principles and water conservation irrigation. Discourage use of invasive and non-native plant species except in identified recreation or park areas.
- 1.9 Landscaping materials should blend with the native vegetation in mature height and form at the time of planting.

## **2. Natural Habitats**

Sensitive areas, such as washes and areas of known historic significance, which serve an important purpose, should be preserved to the greatest extent possible.

- 2.1 Washes should be kept in their natural state or re-vegetated if previously disturbed.
- 2.2 Prior to the issuance of zoning clearances, an archaeological survey should be conducted with exceptions granted by the State Historic Preservation Office.

## **3. Character/Identity**

Residents and property owners expressed an interest in maintaining their quality of life, the natural beauty, and quiet charm of the area. New applicable development is encouraged to blend with these qualities.

- 3.1 Encourage the use of open space buffers along the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor and between incompatible land uses to help mitigate impacts.
- 3.2 Discourage new development on 15% or greater slopes.
- 3.3 Development styles within the corridor boundary should reflect a southwestern style, and the Sonoran Desert region.
- 3.4 New, applicable development should provide plan(s) which show Maricopa County Regional Trail and connections to residential uses.

#### **4. Building Height**

Building height is an important consideration because it can impact views and the amount of natural light available to surrounding property. Development will be visible in the scenic corridor but should blend with the surrounding area to help preserve the views that support the area's character and quality of life. Building height is encouraged to meet the following guidelines.

- 4.1 For new homes in subdivisions and master planned communities within the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor, encourage homes to be limited to single story and limited to 30' in height.
- 4.2 For new applicable retail commercial development, encourage building height to be limited to 30' within the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor. Development should be limited to two stories. New commercial development adjacent to any rural or residential zoning district should be limited to 20' in height within 100 feet of the property line and provide a landscape buffer.
- 4.3 For new applicable industrial development, encourage building height to be limited to 30' within the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor. New industrial development adjacent to any rural or residential zoning district should be limited to 20' in height within 100 feet of the property line and provide a landscape buffer.

#### **5. Lighting**

Lighting is important for community safety and protection. For pedestrians, automobiles, commercial businesses, and homeowners, lighting provides real and perceived safety. The intent of these guidelines is to promote a safe community, yet limit the impacts that lighting has on surrounding properties. Therefore, applicable development will be encouraged to meet the following lighting guidelines. Applicable lighting will include parking lot lighting, security lighting, and any other lighting source, freestanding or affixed to walls if mounted higher than ten feet in new residential subdivisions, master planned communities, commercial, or industrial development.

- 5.1 Discourage the use of neon-type lighting, except for where appropriate for street lighting.
- 5.2 Street lighting should be limited to the minimum height necessary to help minimize glare and reflected light levels. New street lighting within the scenic corridor should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.3 To help minimize nighttime glare, encourage the use of muted or low level lighting. Street, security, and other prominent light sources should be directed downward.

5.4 Parking lot lighting and security lighting should not exceed 18' in height.

## **6. Signs**

To help maintain the character of the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor, new signs are encouraged to follow the guidelines below. These guidelines apply to freestanding signs and those attached to structures in new residential subdivisions, master planned communities, commercial, or industrial development. All new road, directional, and traffic signs will be allowed at the discretion of Maricopa County Department of Transportation and should adhere to their standards.

- 6.1 Encourage the use of non-reflective surfaces for new commercial and monument signs, except for directional, regulatory, and other signs necessary for public safety.
- 6.2 New billboard are discouraged inside the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor. All signs, other than those intended for temporary purpose, should be compatible with the surrounding area.
- 6.3 Non-illuminated commercial signs (freestanding and wall mounted) should be no greater than twelve feet in height and no greater than 36 square feet.
- 6.4 Illuminated commercial signs should be no greater than ten feet in height and no greater than 24 square feet.
- 6.5 Commercial and industrial wall mounted signs: encourage no more than one sign per street frontage.
- 6.6 Signs elevated by single pole are discouraged. Freestanding signs should be monument type and rural in character.
- 6.7 Signs should be consistent with the architectural treatment of the primary-use building and overall character of the site.
- 6.8 Monument signs are encouraged to have a landscape area located adjacent to its base.

## **7. Fencing**

Fencing can impede views and reduce the sense of open space. To limit these impacts, the following fencing guidelines should be followed for new residential subdivisions, master planned communities, commercial, and industrial developments, except where noted.

- 7.1 View fencing is encouraged for residential subdivisions. Fencing for industrial and commercial developments are subject to the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance.

- 7.2 Encourage fencing that does not interfere with public views.
- 7.3 Perimeter fences and walls should be constructed of materials that will compliment the surrounding scenic resources and, where feasible, be combined with unobstructing landscaping.
- 7.4 Straight, uninterrupted walls should not exceed 150' in length. Walls greater than 150' in length should be staggered or undulating.
- 7.5 Perimeter fences and walls should be limited to 6' in height as measured from grade. CMU (non-interlocking) finished with rounded edges, integral colored or painted adobe, and/or native stone works are preferred materials for walls.
- 7.6 Chain link fence is discouraged.

## **8. Miscellaneous**

The following section addresses various design features, such as screening, utilities, accessory structure, color, and other issues not addressed elsewhere. Again, these are applicable to new residential subdivisions, master planned communities, commercial and industrial development.

- 8.1 Service entries oriented toward the centerline of the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor are discouraged.
- 8.2 Mechanical equipment should be ground mounted and fully screened. If roof mounted equipment is required it should be fully screened to the tallest piece of equipment. Screening should be integrated with building design and the surrounding area.
- 8.3 New utility lines should be located underground.
- 8.4 Retaining walls and other erosion control devices should be constructed of natural materials whenever possible and should, to the maximum extent possible, be designed and sited so as not to detract from the scenic quality of the area and not impede wildlife movement.
- 8.5 Screening should be architecturally compatible with primary structures and the surrounding area.
- 8.6 Trash containers, loading docks, transformers, and large mechanical and/or electrical equipment should be screened from view with materials and/or colors that are compatible with primary structures.

- 8.7 Building colors should be muted and compatible with the surrounding area to reduce visual contrast, heat gain, and reflective glare.
- 8.8 Accessory structures should match the style and appearance of the principal building.
- 8.9 Vehicle entrance and exit to non-residential development should be limited to a single point, except if traffic studies demonstrate that additional access points are necessary. Encourage the use of shared driveways and parking for commercial development wherever possible.
- 8.10 At least twenty percent of the surface areas of commercial parking lots should be landscaped with native vegetation, not including perimeter landscaping. Landscaping should involve shading to help reduce heat absorption.
- 8.11 Reflective glass is discouraged.
- 8.12 Parking lots should be designed in groupings no larger than 200 spaces. Larger lots should be divided by buildings, plazas, or significant landscaped areas oriented for pedestrian use.
- 8.13 Non-reflective paint should be used on cell towers and their associated buildings.

## **SUMMARY**

It is likely that urban growth is occurring and will occur along the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor, which will present residents and stakeholders with important changes. Mitigating the potential impacts of these changes will continue to be a high priority for Maricopa County. Because these guidelines reflect the recommendations of residents and other stakeholders, they provide a unique opportunity for these residents and stakeholders to participate in the future growth and development of their area.



## APPENDIX



1.5 Examples of plant species and density found along the corridor.



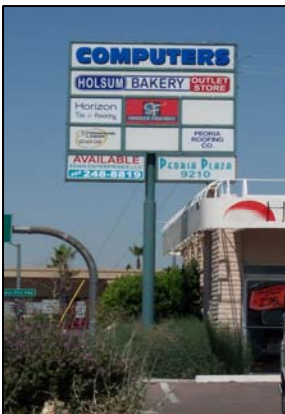
2.1 Example of a wash in the study area.



3.3 Example of southwestern style development.



5.3 Example of parking lot lighting directed downward.



6.6 The use of signs elevated by a single pole is discouraged.



6.8 An example of landscaping around the base of a monument sign.



7.1 Examples of residential view fences.



7.5 Example of preferred finish on perimeter fence.



8.6 An example of a trash container enclosure that is architecturally compatible with the primary structure



8.10 Example of parking lot landscaping.